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JAPAN

Monograph Three

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JAPANESE DECLARATIONS AND ASSURANCES RESPECTING PARTICIPATION IN THE EUROPEAN WAR IN THE PACIFIC



*All that concerns the Pacific Basin—the theatre where
meet two great alien civilizations*

Asiatic Institute Press
New York, November 1914



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INTRODUCTION

November 8, 1914.

Japan's growth and expansion is the principal Asiatic factor in the conflict arising out of the contact of European and Asiatic civilizations in East Asia and the Pacific Basin. On account of the disturbances to the relations between Western countries in the Pacific Basin and countries of East Asia, especially to the relations and affairs of Japan and the United States due to this expansion, and raised by the extension of the operations of the European War to those regions, representatives of the Japanese Government and of the Government of Great Britain, the ally of Japan, have addressed various declarations and assurances to the Government and people of the United States as shown herein. This action is in accordance with formal agreement existing between Japan and the United States for free exchange of views on matters affecting their mutual interests.

The solution of the difficulties existing between the two civilizations in the Pacific Basin hinges on the question of Asiatic immigration and of expansion. The principal questions between the United States and Japan are those of the treaty rights of Japanese in the United States, including the rights of land ownership and immigration residence and travel. Japan's territorial and political expansion and the effect of the European War and other wars upon it is shown chronologically by the following:

- 1874 Japan by treaty secured China's relinquishment of the Loo-choo Islands.
- 1875 Japan obtained from Russia the southern Kurile Islands in exchange for the southern half of Saghalin.
- 1876 Bonin Islands in possession of the Japanese.
- 1879 The Loo-choo Islands not already included in Kagoshima Prefecture incorporated into the Japanese Empire.
- 1895 Formosa and the Pescadores ceded to Japan.
- 1905 Saghalin conquered by the Japanese. The portion south of the 50th parallel was ceded to them by Russia. Port Arthur and Kuangtung leased territory occupied.
- 1910 Korea annexed by Japan.
- 1914 (October 6) Jaluit, dominating the Marshall and Caroline Islands, captured. (November 6) Kiao-Chau captured.

ASIATIC INSTITUTE

*Japanese Declarations and Assurances
respecting participation in the European War in the Pacific
addressed to
the Government and people of the United States and others*

1914

Count Okuma, Premier *in a cable dispatch to the East and West News Bureau, Brooklyn, and to Dr. Toyokichi Iyenaga. Dated, Tokio, August 15, 1914.*

“Japan’s proximity to China breeds many absurd rumors, but I declare that Japan acts with a clear conscience, in conformity with justice, and in perfect accord with her ally. Japan has no territorial ambition, and hopes to stand as the protector of peace in the Orient.”

Japan’s Ultimatum to Germany.—From texts given to the U. S. Government and to the international public press, August 16, 1914.

“We consider it highly important and necessary in the present situation to take measures to remove the causes of all disturbances of the peace in the Far East, and so safeguard the general interests as contemplated by the agreement of alliance between Japan and Great Britain.

“In order to secure a firm and enduring peace in Eastern Asia, the establishment of which is the aim of the said agreement, the Imperial Japanese Government sincerely believes it to be its duty to give the advice to the Imperial German Government to carry out the following two propositions:

“First—To withdraw immediately from Japanese and Chinese waters German men-of-war and armed vessels of all kinds, and to disarm at once those which cannot be so withdrawn.

“Second—To deliver on a date not later than September 15 to the Imperial Japanese authorities, without condition or compensation, the entire leased territory of Kiau-chau, with a view to the eventual restoration of the same to China.

“The Imperial Japanese Government announces at the same time that in the event of it not receiving by noon on August 23, 1914, an answer from the Imperial German Government, signifying its unconditional acceptance of the above advice offered by the Imperial Japanese Government, Japan will be compelled to take such action as she may deem necessary to meet the situation.”

Announcement from the British Official News Bureau, London, August 17, 1914. A statement from the British Foreign Office was formally presented to the Secretary of State, Washington, August 18, 1914, by Colville Barclay, Chargé d’Affaires of the British Embassy.

“It is understood that the action of Japan will not extend to the Pacific beyond the China seas, except as may be necessary to protect Japanese shipping lines in the Pacific, nor in Asiatic waters westward of the China seas, nor in foreign territories except territory in German occupation on the Continent of Asia.”

Count Okuma *in addressing a gathering of business men from various parts of Japan.* Tokio, August 18, 1914.

“Japan’s warlike operations will not extend beyond the limits necessary for the attainment of the object of the defense of her own legitimate interests.

“The Imperial Government will take no such action as could give to a third party any cause for anxiety or uneasiness regarding the safety of their territories or possessions.”

Japanese Foreign Minister *to the Secretary of State at Washington,* August 20, 1914.

“From the beginning of hostilities between England and Germany the latter has been banding all her energies to strengthening all the fortifications at Kiau-chau, even to the extent of enforcing labor by means of Chinese coolies. Meanwhile, the Government’s squadrons stationed in the Far East have been making incessant appearances in Chinese waters, making Kiao-chau their base, and, in co-operation with German converted cruisers, threatening and interfering with British shipping and commerce, thereby jeopardizing and injuring to a considerable extent the commercial interests in general of Great Britain.

“In the meantime the above action on the part of Germany has not failed to greatly demoralize the trade interests of Japan by obstructing and disturbing her shipping routes and commerce. In fact, the whole eastern commercial world has been thrown into a state of utmost uneasiness. Some of the Japanese merchant vessels have been detained, and all of the Japanese import and export cargoes on board German merchant vessels have been requisitioned.

“It is clear that unless Germany has a strong base at Kiao-chau the conditions such as above outlined could never have been produced. It is this position of Kiao-chau that is solely responsible for it all; it is the strongest weapon in the hands of Germany so far as the Far East is concerned.

“The history of the seizure of the place by Germany and her conduct preceding and including her intervention, in conjunction with Russia and France, after the China-Japanese War, show that it is absolutely necessary to eliminate such possession completely if Japan is to restore immediately complete peace in the Far East in accordance with the terms of the Anglo-Japanese alliance. If Japan is to look far enough into the future and adopt measures to insure an abiding peace in Eastern Asia she must realize that a strong military base in the hands of a hostile militant power right in the heart of the country cannot in itself fail to be a menacing factor.”

Copy of the Declaration of War, delivered by Viscount Chinda to Robert Lansing, Counselor of the State Department, August 23, 1914, 2 P. M.

“Issued at Tokio, August 23, 6 P. M.

“We, by the grace of Heaven, Emperor of Japan, seated on the throne occupied by the same dynasty from time immemorial, do hereby make the following proclamation to all our loyal and brave subjects:

“We hereby declare war against Germany, and we command our army and navy to carry on hostilities against that empire with their strength, and we also command our competent authorities to make every effort, in pursuance of their respective duties, to attain the national aim by all means within the limits of the law of nations.

"Since the outbreak of the present war in Europe, the calamitous effect of which we view with grave concern, we on our part have entertained hopes of preserving the peace of the Far East by the maintenance of strict neutrality, but the action of Germany has at length compelled Great Britain, our ally, to open hostilities against that country, and Germany is at Kiao-Chau, its leased territory in China, busy with warlike preparations, while its armed vessels cruising the seas of Eastern Asia are threatening our commerce and that of our ally. Peace of the Far East is thus in jeopardy.

"Accordingly our Government and that of his Britannic Majesty, after full and frank communication with each other, agreed to take such measures as may be necessary for the protection of the general interests contemplated in the Agreement of Alliance, and we on our part, being desirous to attain that object by peaceful means, commanded our Government to offer with sincerity an advice to the Imperial German Government. By the last day appointed for the purpose, however, our Government failed to receive an answer accepting their advice. It is with profound regret that we, in spite of our ardent devotion to the cause of peace, are thus compelled to declare war, especially at this early period of our reign and while we are still in mourning for our lamented mother.

"It is our earnest wish that by the loyalty and valor of our faithful subjects peace may soon be restored and the glory of the Empire be enhanced."

Japanese Premier's Message to the American people.—Cabled to The Independent magazine, New York, by Count Okuma, August 24, 1914.

"I gladly seize the opportunity to send, through the medium of The Independent, a message to the people of the United States, who have always been helpful and loyal friends of Japan.

"It is my desire to convince your people of the sincerity of my Government and of my people in all their utterances and assurances connected with the present regrettable situation in Europe and the Far East.

"Every sense of loyalty and honor oblige Japan to co-operate with Great Britain to clear from these waters the enemies who in the past, the present and the future menace her interests, her trade, her shipping, and her people's lives.

"This Far Eastern situation is not of our seeking.

"It was ever my desire to maintain peace, as will be amply proved; as President of the Peace Society of Japan I have consistently so endeavored.

"I have read with admiration the lofty message of President Wilson to his people on the subject of neutrality.

"We, of Japan, are appreciative of the spirit and motives that promoted the head of your great nation, and we feel confident that his message will meet with a national response.

"As Premier of Japan, I have stated and I now again state to the people of America and of the world that Japan has no ulterior motive, no desire to secure more territory, no thought of depriving China or other peoples of anything which they now possess.

"My Government and my people have given their word and their pledge, which will be as honorably kept as Japan always keeps promises.—OKUMA."

*Note of blockade of Kiao-Chau signed by Vice-Admiral Kato, cabled to the Japanese Embassy,
Washington, August 28, 1914.*

"I hereby declare that on this 27th day of August, 1914, the entire coast extending from 120 degrees 10 minutes east and 35 degrees 54 minutes north to 123 degrees 16 minutes east and 36 degrees 7 minutes north (the entire coast of the leased territory of Kiao-Chau) has been placed in a state of blockade by a complete force of his Imperial Japanese Majesty's ships under my command, and that the said blockade continues in force, and further, that the neutral vessels in the zone of blockade are allowed twenty-four hours within which to withdraw from the said zone.

"Any vessel that attempts to violate the blockade will be dealt with in conformity to the law of nations and the respective treaties between the Empire of Japan and the neutral powers.

"Given on board his Imperial Japanese Majesty's ship Suo, this 27th day of August, 1914."

Official statement issued by the Navy Department, Tokio, October 6, 1914.

"The Japanese squadron delegated to destroy the German fleet in the South Seas has landed bluejackets on Jaluit Island, the seat of Government in the Marshall Archipelago, which was annexed by Germany in 1886.

"It is believed the German base was destroyed, and that the fortifications, arms, and ammunition were seized. A British steamer in port was released. There was no resistance to the Japanese."

Official statement by the Japanese Embassy, Washington, October 6, 1914.

"The Japanese Embassy has just received an official cablegram from Tokio practically confirming the report of the destroying of the military establishments on Jaluit Island, one of the German bases in the Marshall Archipelago, which appeared as a Tokio Telegram in a morning paper.

"In the above connection, it may be recalled that the German men-of-war have been making their appearance in the Pacific and the South Seas and have been disturbing the shipping routes ever since the outbreak of the present war. This fact at last compelled the allied fleets of Japan and Great Britain to decide upon expeditionary measures to keep the routes clear, as was recently reported in the press. In the light of this fact it may be safely concluded that the action taken by a portion of the Japanese expeditionary squadron above referred to is nothing but a step toward the fulfillment of the expeditionary mission."

Vice-Minister of the Navy, Suzuki speaking November 7 of the future of Tsing-tau. Statement given out to the press, Tokio, November 7, 1914.

"While the European War continues Tsing-tau will be administered by Japan. At the conclusion of the war Japan will open negotiations with China."

Official statement issued at Sydney, November 18, 1914, by Mr. Pearce. (Dispatch to The London Morning Post.)

“ The Japanese Government has intimated to the British Government that it is ready to hand over the Marshall and other German islands in the Pacific, which are temporarily occupied by the Japanese, to an Australian force. The British Government has informed the Japanese Government of its intention to act accordingly. A special Australian force will be dispatched to the islands and will remain in occupation until the termination of the war, when the matter of the ultimate disposal of the islands will be a question for consideration by the allied powers.

“ As the Federal Government will have the responsibility for the occupation of islands it is necessary that not only the military occupation, but such matters as trade, food supply, and postal and commercial affairs be investigated and organized. Commander Pethebridge will accompany the force to make the necessary arrangements.”